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**Subject:** A Reaction to the Neonic PIDs that were issued last week  
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## PESTICIDES

# EPA proposes no new restrictions for bee-killing chemicals

Marc Heller, E&E News reporter Published: Thursday, January 30, 2020



Neonicotinoid pesticides have been blamed for harming bee colonies. Jo Zimny Photos/Flickr

EPA today proposed new guidelines on the use of five pesticides that pose potential threats to bees and other wildlife but didn't move toward restricting their use.

In a proposed interim decision on five neonicotinoids — acetamiprid, clothianidin, dinotefuran, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam — EPA recommended measures to prevent the chemicals from escaping the field where they're targeted and called for the use of more protective equipment to shield workers.

The pesticides are widely used on crops such as apples, beans and cotton. One type, thiamethoxam, was once used as a wood preservative, EPA said.

They've become controversial in recent years due to their toxicity to pollinators, including bees. Other species are at risk, too, including various types of birds, the agency said. Organizations including the Center for Biological Diversity have called for a ban on neonics, as they're called.

But EPA has turned away calls to stop their use, citing their important role in agriculture and the reduction of risks if they're used according to label instructions.

Among other measures, EPA directs that neonics not be used during flowering season, to protect bees. And the agency said it's recommending reduced use on crops where they might pose the greatest hazard.

Because of acetamiprid's threat to certain birds that might eat treated seeds, EPA said labels should contain language advising users to collect any seeds that spill during loading and planting.

The debate over use of neonicotinoids pits farm and horticulture industry groups such as the National Cotton Council against the Center for Biological Diversity and other environmental organizations. For the review of acetamiprid, for instance, the Northwest Horticultural Council and the Cotton Council submitted comments endorsing neonics broadly, while CBD cited the effect on pollinators.

EPA said farmers used about 80,000 pounds of acetamiprid from 2014 to 2018 on 850,000 acres.

A spokeswoman for the Center for Biological Diversity, Lori Ann Burd, told E&E News that EPA's actions are in sharp contrast to regulators in Europe and Canada who've moved to limit the use of neonics.

"These pesticides are simply too dangerous to be used," Burd said, adding that they persist in the soil after application.

EPA said it will accept public comments on the decisions for 60 days, once they're published in the *Federal Register*.

The decision on acetamiprid can be found [here](#).

The decision on clothianidin and thiamethoxam can be found [here](#).

The decision on imidacloprid can be found [here](#).

The decision on dinotefuran can be found [here](#).

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